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Message Text

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51
ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 INT-08 IO-14 SCI-06 EPA-04 EB-11

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FMC-04 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

CG-00 COA-02 DLOS-06 CEQ-02 L-03 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

AID-20 /157 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CAR:GBHIGH:NB
APPROVED BY ARA/CAR:JRBURKE
IO:CGRIP/CSYLVESTER (DRAFT)
ARA/USOAS:GMONSMA (DRAFT)
SCI/EN:GKULICK (DRAFT)
EPA/WMANSFIELD (SUBS)
ARA/CAR:JSIMMS (DRAFT)
EB/ORF/FSE:WWHITMAN (DRAFT)
INTERIOR:MPROCHNIK (DRAFT)
---------- 021286
R 181646Z OCT 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON
INFO AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A/
TAGS: ENGR, SENU DR
SUBJECT: MONA ISLAND DEEPWATER PORT
REF: SANTO DOMINGO 4246
FOR USDEL IMCO
1. FOLLOWING SUPPLIED SOLELY AS BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR USDEL ON MONA PROJECT.
(A) PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENT HAS HAD UNDER STUDY FOR PAST YEAR CONSTRUCTION OF A DEEPWATER PETROLEUM PORT AT MONA ISLAND AND SEVERAL ALTERNATE SITES ON MAINLAND PUERTO RICO. REFINERY AND TRANSSHIPMENT FACILITIES WOULD SUPPLY PUERTO RICO AND/OR US EAST COAST AND SUPPORT PETROCHEMICAL
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INDUSTRIES IN PUERTO RICO. ON SEPTEMBER 16 PUERTO RICAN

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GOVERNOR HERNANDEZ-COLON ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION THAT PUERTO RICO NEEDS DEEPWATER PORT AND ADDITIONAL REFINERY; THESE FACILITIES SHOULD BE CONSTRUCTED "PREFERABLY" AT MONA ISLAND, WITH CONDITIONS AND TERMS OF PROJECT BEING PUBLICIZED BEFORE FINAL DECISION OR UNDERTAKING. HE SAID OIL SPILLS AT MONA WOULD IN NO WAY AFFECT PUERTO RICO OR DOMINICAN REPUBLIC AND PLEDGED CLOSE EXAMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS. (NUMBER OF STEPS AND STUDIES REMAIN TO BE TAKEN BEFORE CONSTRUCTION COULD BEGIN, INCLUDING,WE UNDERSTAND FROM PUERTO RICAN COMMONWEALTH OFFICE DIRECTOR IN WASHINGTON, PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.)

(B) THERE IS OPPOSITION TO PROJECT FROM ENVIRONMENTALISTS IN PUERTO RICO, AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC HAS SENT US TWO

DIPLOMATIC NOTES EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF OIL SPILLS ON DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ENVIRONMENT. IN THEIR VIEW, OIL SPILLS CARRIED BY CURRENTS IN MONA PASSAGE THREATEN DOM REP BEACHES AND FISHERIES. STRONG OPPOSITION HAS BEEN EXPRESSED BY DOM REP EXECUTIVE BRANCH, CONGRESS AND PRESS. WHILE SOME OF THIS STEMS FROM DOM REP-PUERTO RICAN RIVALRIES AND ALSO REFLECTS POSTURING FOR UPCOMING DOMINICAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN, MUCH OF THE CRITICISM APPEARS TO BE RESULT OF HONEST CONCERN. OPPOSITION HAS ALSO ARISEN IN UN COMMITTEE OF 24 (DECOLONIZATION), WHICH RECENTLY PASSED GENERAL RESOLUTION CALLING INTER ALIA FOR US TO PREVENT ANY VIOLATION OF PUERTO RICAN RIGHTS BY "CORPORATE BODIES",WHICH WOULD BE INFERRED FROM PRECEDING DEBATE AS DIRECTED AT DEEPWATER PORT.

(C) ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS ARE OF CONCERN TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES--PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENT, USG, AND DOM REP. SOME STUDIES HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN BY PUERTO RICO AND OTHERS WILL BE MADE. DATA ON CURRENTS IN MONA PASSAGE VARY AND LEND TO SEVERAL INTERPRETATIONS. SOME OIL SPILLS IN THE MONA PASSAGE OR OIL POLLUTION FROM PUMPING DIRTY TANKER BALLASTS HAVE HARMED DOMINICAN BEACHES IN PAST.

2. IF DOMINICANS RAISE ISSUE OF MONA PROJECT IN IMCO
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CONFERENCE, USDEL SHOULD HANDLE MATTER IN VERY LOW KEY AND WITHOUT BEING DEFENSIVE, MAY AT ITS DISCRETION (POSSIBLY RESTRICTED TO PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS) DRAW ON FOLLOWING POINTS AS APPROPRIATE:

(A) FACT IS TECHNOLOGY NOW REQUIRES NEW APPROACHES TO PETROLEUM TRANSPORT, DEEPWATER PORTS ARE NEEDED FOR THIS TECHNOLOGY, AND THEY CAN BE BENEFICIAL FROM ENVIRONMENTAL

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STANDPOINT.

(B) MONA PROJECT IS UNDER STUDY; ISLAND'S RELATIVE ISOLATION (42 STATUTE MILES FROM PUERTO RICO AND 35 MILES FROM DOM REP) SEEMS TO MAKE IT VERY SUITABLE FOR LOCATION OF DEEPWATER PORT AND REFINERY. IT WOULD MEET VERY REAL NEEDS OF PUERTO RICO AND U.S. EAST COAST.

(C) WE AND PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENT ARE AWARE OF DOM REP CONCERN. WE HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGING A MEETING OF PUERTO RICAN AND DOM REP OFFICIALS TO EXAMINE ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF PROJECT, AND SUCH A MEETING, WE UNDERSTAND, IS TO TAKE PLACE SHORTLY.

(D) ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF PROJECT WILL BE FULLY EXAMINED

AS WE RECOGNIZE OUR OBLIGATIONS TO GODR UNDER STOCKHOLM DECLARATION ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. KISSINGER

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